to the contract labour in Coal India Limited and its subsidiaries;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Coal India Limited and its subsidiaries are violating the Contract Labour Abolition Act on specific work;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the action the Government propose to take against the officials involved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH) : (a) and (b). Coal India Limited and its subsidiaries do not engage any labour on contract for execution on work of permanent and perennial nature. However, jobs which do not fall under the prohibited categories under Section 10 of the Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act, 1970 are awarded to contractors who engage their own workers.

(c) Coal India Ltd. and its subsidiaries closely monitor the implementation of the provisions of the Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act, 1970 to prevent any contravention thereof.

(d) and (e). Do not arise in view of the above.

Pending Excise Dispute

*233. SHRI G. VENKAT SWAMY : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the number of excise disputes pending for adjudication for the last more than 5 years;

(b) how much amount is locked in these disputes and the reasons for pendency of these cases; and

(c) the steps the Government propose to take for the expeditious disposal of outstanding excise disputes?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) to (c). The number of Excise disputes pending for adjudication for the last more than 5 years is 6813.

The amount locked up in these disputes is approximately Rs. 814.38 crores. Many of the issues involved in the cases are pending before CEGAT, High Courts or the Supreme Court.

Various measures are being taken to expedite finalisation of the cases at the stage of adjudication and appeal before the Tribunal and courts. These include sanctioning of more posts of Commissioners to deal, inter-alia, with adjudication, reviewing of powers of Adjudication of Central Excise. Officers at various levels, appointment of common adjudicators to exclusively deal with some of the cases which are complex and appointment of senior counsel to represent the Department.

[Translation]

Spices Processing and Packaging Units

*234. SHRIMATI BHAVNA BEN DEVRAJ BHAICHIKHALIA :
SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have chalked out any scheme for encouraging spices processing packaging and oleores-in units through the Spices Board in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any assistance is being given to such small scale industrial units;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether any multinational company is marketing these products in the country;

(f) if so, the details thereof;

(g) whether the Government have received any proposal from multinational companies for setting up joint venture industries in this sector;

(h) if so, the details thereof; and

(i) the likely impact of such joint venture industries on export and production of spices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. Some of the schemes being implemented for promoting export of value added spices and spice oleoresins include :-

(1) Providing grant-in-aid for technology transfer and process upgradation to spice exporters for establishing spice processing units and adopting new technology.

(2) Providing interest free loans to exporters of spices of approved brands in consumer packs.

(3) Assistance for undertaking R & D work for product development, research programmes through research institutions/agencies.

(4) Providing grant-in-aid for setting up laboratory and accreditation under ISO 9000.

(5) Providing grant-in-aid to meet packaging cost for export

(6) Awarding 'Spice House Certificate' and 'Indian Spice Logo' to exporters of consumer packed spices as recognition of mark of quality.

(c) and (d). Small scale units can also avail of all the benefits of the various schemes of he Spices Board.

(e) and (f). Multinational companies are engaged in spice processing in the country. Multinational companies

registered as 100% EOUs in the agricultural sector including spices are permitted to sell upto 50% of their production in the domestic tariff area. McCormick and Burns Philip have not marketed their products in the country.

(g) and (h). A number of multinational companies have shown interest in establishing joint ventures/ 100% Export Oriented Units in the Spices Sector. Some of the major multinational companies which have established spices processing units in India as joint venture/foreign owned company are McCormick, and Burns Philip.

(i) With the establishment of these joint ventures, the country has benefitted through the induction of new technologies and capital, sourcing of raw materials from within the country for primary processing, improving the returns to the growers and enhancement of export of value-added spices/spice products.

Export of Chillies

*235. SHRI SYDAIAH KOTA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) the total quantity of chillies exported and foreign exchange earned therefrom during each of the last three years;

(b) the target set for export of chillies for 1996-97; and

(c) the measures taken to protect the stock of chillies from the attack of fungus in view of the recent cyclone in Andhra Pradesh so that exports are not rejected?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (DR. B.B. RAMAIAH) : (a) The total quantity and value of chillies exported during the last 3 years are given below :

Year	Quantity (Tonnes)	Value Rs. Crores
1993-94	30,776	72.14
1994-95	20,096	57.12
1995-96 (P)	56,073	194.15

(Source : Spices Board, Kochi, DGCI & S, Calcutta)

(b) Government has not fixed spice-wise targets for exports. Spices Board has fixed a target of 40,000 MT valued at Rs. 160 crores for the year 1996-97 for export of chillies.

(c) Training programmes on post harvest handling of chillies are being conducted jointly with the Department of Agriculture, Andhra Pradesh by the Spices Board. In such training programmes, growers are being advised to store harvested pods in heaps either indoors or in shade away from direct sunlight for 2-3 days, so as to develop uniform red colour, at 22* - 25* C. Subsequent to this, pods be dried in the sun by spreading them out on clean, dry mats, cemented or concreted surfaces/terraces etc. ensuring that the product does not get any contaminations from the drying yard or premises. Pods should be spread out in thin layers for uniform drying with frequent stirring which is essential for preventing mould growth and discolouration. The material should be heaped and covered by clean gunny bags/tarpaulin at night. When the moisture level in dried chilli pods is below 15%, they should be packed in clean dry gunny bags and stored ensuring protection from dampaness. Dunnage has to be provided to stack the packed bags to prevent moisture ingress from the cloth. Care should be taken to stack the bags 50-60 centimetres away from the wall.

Coal Washeries

*236. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Coal India Limited propose to set up more coal washeries at collieries to improve quality of coal;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the progress so far made in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH) : (a) to (c). Four coal washeries, namely Kedla (coking) with 2.60 million tonnes per annum capacity and Piparwar (non-coking) with 6.5 million tonnes per annum capacity in Central Coalfields Limited (CCL), Madhuband (coking) with with 2.50 million tonnes per annum capacity in Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCCL) and Bina (non-coking) with 4.5 million tonnes per annum capacity in Northern Coalfields Limited (NCL) are in the final stages of completion.

Coal India Limited (CIL) have issued Letters of Intent to private investors for setting up of washeries on 'build-own-operate' basis at the following four sites :

Name of Washery	Capacity (Million Tonnes per annum)
Dipka (South Eastern Coalfields Limited)	6.00
Kalinga (MCL)	8.00
Ananta-Bharatpur (MCL)	5.20
Sasti (Western Coalfieds Limited)	1.50

In addition, CIL have identified two more sites viz. Raigarh (SECL) and Tikok (North Eastern Coalfields) for establishment of washeries.